

in the wake of the Watergate scandal. That certainly was not easy.

He was also an early Republican leader on issues of environmental stewardship and responsible, commonsense conservationism in the spirit of Republican President Teddy Roosevelt that has the support from local communities.

He cosponsored legislation that created the Gateway National Recreation Area, which stretches along the northeast Atlantic coast from New York to New Jersey and is home to one of the most significant bird sanctuaries in the northeast part of the United States.

As an avid birder himself, I am sure that this is one of the many proud aspects of the judge's important legacy to New York and to the rest of the country.

I think without a doubt, the most important legacy Jim Buckley has left all of us in the past 100 years has been his commitment to freedom and American liberty in both words and deeds.

He fought for American freedom in the Pacific in World War II. Like so many from his "greatest generation," he literally saved the world from tyranny.

He spoke eloquently of American freedom throughout his life. In another one of his books, titled "If Men Were Angels," he wrote the following:

I believe that in the last analysis the most important thing in social and political life is freedom, and I believe that it is because of the safeguards written into the Constitution, and the character of the American people, that we have enjoyed it in so great a measure.

More than any other country.

Mr. President, this great American patriot has left his mark on the American soul and American history and American heritage at the highest levels of our Federal Government, in all three branches of service.

Thank you for your exceptional service to our great Nation, Judge Buckley. All of the U.S. Senate and all of America wish you a happy and healthy 100th birthday.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Lujan). The majority whip.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday, I joined Leader SCHUMER, Senators BALDWIN, BLUMENTHAL, and MURRAY and a number of my colleagues in introducing a piece of legislation that is urgently needed. It is entitled the Women's Health Protection Act of 2023.

This bill would protect the right to obtain and provide reproductive healthcare—as basic as anything in America—as well as the freedom of Americans to seek this care free of medically unnecessary restrictions or limitations as to where a patient can receive it.

It has been about 9 months since the Thomas-Alito Court ripped away this fundamental right in America and put a target on the backs of women and healthcare providers across the coun-

try. Since then, we have heard one horror story after another—stories of rape victims as young as 10 years old who have been forced to travel across State lines to receive critical healthcare, stories of women who were suffering miscarriages but still have been denied care by doctors in red States where the doctors are afraid of being charged with a crime, stories of women who have been abandoned by their State's leaders, many of whom have found refuge in the State of Illinois.

Despite these stories of girls and women who have been denied critical healthcare because of partisan politics, Republicans are continuing to push dangerous abortion bans and restrictions. These politicians think they know better than the women who are affected by these decisions and their doctors.

Beware of the moment when legislators start playing doctor. They are doing it all across America on this issue. They are wrong.

We need to respect the freedom and right of women and the expertise of their medical professionals, period, and we need to recognize that politicians have no business in the hospital room or in the doctor's office. There should be a matter of privacy and respect that should be guiding our policy.

If we want to defend freedom and fundamental rights in America, we need to pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

The debate has even gone so far as to affect the corner drugstore.

This week, I was on the phone with the CEO of Walgreens, an Illinois-based company, one of the largest pharmacy companies in the United States of America. They are torn currently by an announcement of policy earlier this week which generated a lot of controversy: whether or not they will dispense medications which are used to end a pregnancy.

I begged them to at least wait until this issue has become clearer in the courts before taking a corporate position. The other major pharmacy chains are making the same decision themselves. We will find out what they conclude.

But it is an indication that this debate has gone far beyond the floor of the U.S. Senate in Washington—it is on your street corner; it is in your mall; it is in the shopping center that you have been going to all your life—as to whether or not you can have access to a drug that was judged safe and effective 20 years ago by the Federal Government.

That is what happens when legislators decide to be doctors.

CHILD LABOR

Mr. President, on another topic, when you stop by the grocery store to pick up your favorite box of cereal or some chicken breasts for dinner, would you ever guess you were buying a product that had been produced by exploited children? Not in America. Not in 2023. Sorry, I am afraid it is so.

Last week, the New York Times ran an extremely important article about an investigation on what it deemed the "new economy of exploitation." That economy is powered by young migrant children who arrived in this country without their parents and are working at unthinkably dangerous jobs in the American economy.

But the exploitation is not limited to migrant children. In factories across the country, from North Carolina to South Dakota, children as young as 12 years of age—that is right, 12 years of age—are working in the dead of night, in some of the most grueling environments imaginable: freezing cold slaughterhouses and auto part assembly plants—12 years old. These children work as long as 12 hours per shift, and, for migrant children, many are under pressure to send money back home or to pay back the criminals who smuggled them across the border.

Often, these children go to school in the morning because they are trying to learn to speak English and get an education. How can you learn when you are running on no sleep?

Mr. President, I have some personal familiarity with some of these working conditions. When I was a college student, I worked two or three summers to pay my way through college. One of the jobs was on the railroad, a tradition in my family. Fortunately for me, I only have a minor scar to show for my time in the switchyard, but many others were not so lucky.

The other job I had while I worked my way through college was in a meatpacking facility. I spent four summers there. I saw almost every aspect of that type of environment. I cannot imagine a 12-year-old in that dangerous environment. So when I hear young children are working long hours in meatpacking plants and slaughterhouses, it is beyond horrifying. It is beyond unconscionable, and it has to end.

These accounts of children working in slaughterhouses and factories are not only shocking; they are blatantly unlawful in America. Our Nation outlawed oppressive child labor almost 100 years ago. This is a problem that should be relegated to history books or novels by Dickens, but it is not.

In fact, since 2018, there has been a nearly 70-percent increase in illegally employed children. When the number of children being forced to work dangerous and potentially deadly jobs is on the rise, it is clear that our child labor laws are not up to speed.

Let me add the obvious. This is another condemnation of the failure of our immigration policy in America. Consider the fact that people desperately need workers—desperately. In every corner of my State of Illinois, they tell me one after the other: We need more police. We need more firefighters. We need more ambulance drivers. We need more healthcare workers. We need more workers in our nursing home—and on and on and on.

And why are we facing these shortages? We are facing them because, for 4